

IN THE CLAIMS

1-53. (cancelled)

54. (currently amended) A coupling closure for substantially environmentally-sealed, reversible closure of containers or hose elements, comprising:

at least one first flexible band with an inner side and at least one first closure element on its said inner side, said at least one first closure element comprising a male projection extending outwardly from the inner side or a female cavity extending inwardly from said inner side;

at least one second flexible band with an inner side and at least one second closure element on its said inner side that is complementary to the first closure element and enables a reversible, sealed closure, said at least one second closure element comprising a female cavity extending inwardly from the inner side or a male projection extending outwardly from the inner side;[[and]]

a top side of the first band comprising at least one third closure element and a top side of the second band comprising at least one fourth closure element, said at least one third closure element comprising a male projection extending outwardly from the top side or a female cavity extending inwardly from the top side, and said at least one fourth closure element comprising a male projection extending outwardly from the top side or a female cavity extending inwardly from said the top side; and
the first and second bands being of a substantially same length.

55. (currently amended) A coupling closure of claim 54 wherein the first and second bands ~~are substantially equal in length and the first and second bands~~

are connected with one another at respective end segments to form a closed circumference.

56. (currently amended) A coupling closure for substantially environmentally-sealed, reversible closure of containers or hose elements, comprising:

at least one first flexible band with at least one first closure element on its inner side;

at least one second flexible band with at least one second closure element on its inner side that is complementary to the first closure element and enables a reversible, sealed closure;

a top side of the first band comprising at least one third closure element and a top side of the second band comprising at least one fourth closure element; and

~~A coupling closure according to claim 54 wherein at least one fifth closure element is provided on at least one outer side of the first or second band.~~

57. (currently amended) A coupling closure for substantially environmentally-sealed, reversible closure of containers or hose elements, comprising:

at least one first flexible band with at least one first closure element on its inner side;

at least one second flexible band with at least one second closure element on its inner side that is complementary to the first closure element and enables a reversible, sealed closure;

a top side of the first band comprising at least one third closure element and a top side of the second band comprising at least one fourth closure element; and

~~A coupling closure according to claim 54~~ wherein a closure cover is provided comprising: at least one cover closure element that is complementary to the third or fourth closure elements of the top side of the first or second bands, the cover closure element being connectible with the third or fourth closure elements to form a temporary covering of a connection slit of the first and second bands when the inner sides of first and second bands are connected with one another via an interaction of the first and second closure elements.

58. (previously presented) A coupling closure according to claim 57 wherein the closure cover is connected with the first or second bands.

59-60. (cancelled)

61. (currently amended) A coupling closure according to claim 57 ~~[[54]]~~ wherein a flexible bag or hose has an opening edge connected with the first and second bands.

62. (currently amended) A coupling closure according to claim 57 ~~[[54]]~~ wherein at least the inner side or the top side of the first or second bands comprises a bonding or adhesive layer.

63. (currently amended) A docking device for filling or refilling of bulk material, comprising:

first and second coupling closures, each of the coupling closures comprising:

at least one first flexible band with an inner side and at least one first closure element on its said inner side, said at least one first closure element comprising a male projection extending outwardly from the inner side or a female cavity extending inwardly from the inner side;

at least one second flexible band with an inner side and at least one second closure element on its the inner side that is complementary to the first closure element and enables a reversible, sealed closure, said at least one second closure element comprising a female cavity extending inwardly from the inner side or a male projection extending outwardly from the inner side;[[and]]

a top side of the first band comprising at least one third closure element and a top side of the second band comprising at least one fourth closure element, said at least one third closure element comprising a male projection extending outwardly from the top side or a female cavity extending inwardly from the top side, and said at least one fourth closure element comprising a male projection extending outwardly from the top side or a female cavity extending inwardly from the top side;

the first and second bands being of a substantially same length; and

the third and fourth closure elements of the top sides of the first and second bands of the first coupling closure are complementary to the third and fourth closure elements of the top sides of the first and second bands of the second coupling closure so that the first and second bands of the first and second coupling closures are reversibly connectible with one another.

64. (currently amended) A docking device of claim 63 wherein the first and second coupling closures are for substantially environmentally-sealed reversible closure of containers or hose elements, ~~the first and second bands of the first and second coupling closures are substantially equal in length,~~ and a the first and second bands are connected with one another with respective end segments.

65. (currently amended) A docking device for filling or refilling of bulk material, comprising:

first and second coupling closures, each of the coupling closures comprising:

at least one first flexible band with at least one first closure element on its inner side,

at least one second flexible band with at least one second closure element on its inner side that is complementary to the first closure element and enables a reversible, sealed closure;

a top side of the first band comprising at least one third closure element and a top side of the second band comprising at least one fourth closure element;

the third and fourth closure elements of the top sides of the first and second bands of the first coupling closure are complementary to the third and fourth closure elements of the top sides of the first and second bands of the second coupling closure so that the first and second bands of the first and second coupling closures are reversibly connectible with one another; and

~~A docking device according to claim 63~~ wherein at least one fifth closure element is provided on at least one outer side of the first or second band of the first or second coupling closure, the fifth closure element being complementary to a cover closure element of a closure cover of the first or second coupling closure.

66. (previously presented) A docking device according to claim 65 wherein the closure cover of the first coupling closure is reversibly connectible with at least one cover closure element of the second coupling closure, and the closure cover of the second coupling closure is reversibly connectible with at least one cover closure element of the first coupling closure when the third and fourth closure elements of first and second coupling closure are connected with one another.

67. (currently amended) A docking device according to claim 65 ~~[[63]]~~ wherein the first or second coupling closures are connectible with a flexible container, flexible hose, or hose element.

68. (currently amended) A docking device for filling or refilling of bulk material, comprising:

first and second coupling closures, each of the coupling closures comprising

at least one first flexible band with at least one first closure element on its inner side,

at least one second flexible band with at least one second closure element on its inner side that is complementary to the first closure element and enables a reversible, sealed closure,

a top side of the first band comprising at least one third closure element and a top side of the second band comprising at least one fourth closure element;

the third and fourth closure elements of the top sides of first and second bands of the first coupling closure are complementary to the third and fourth closure elements of the top sides of the first and second bands of the second coupling closure so that the first and second bands of the first and second coupling closures are reversibly connectible with one another; and

~~A docking device according to claim 63~~ wherein the first and the second coupling closures are substantially identical.

69-102. (cancelled)

103. (currently amended) A flexible container system, comprising:

a flexible container; and

a coupling closure connected to said flexible container, said coupling closure comprising at least one first flexible band with at least one first closure element on ~~[[and]]~~ its inner side, at least one second flexible band with at least one second closure element on its inner side which is complementary to the first closure element and enables a reversible, sealed closure, said at least one first closure element comprising a male projection extending outwardly from the inner side or a female cavity extending inwardly from the inner side, and said at least one second closure element comprising a female cavity extending inwardly from the inner side or a male projection extending outwardly from the inner side, and a top side of the first band comprising at least one third closure element and a top side of the second band comprising at least one fourth closure element, said at least one third closure element comprising a male projection extending outwardly from the top side or a female cavity extending inwardly from the top side, and said at least one fourth closure element comprising a female cavity extending inwardly from the top side or a male projection extending outwardly from the top side.

104. (canceled)

105. (currently amended) A transport device, comprising:

a hose; and

a coupling closure for substantially environmentally-sealed reversible closure of said hose, said coupling closure comprising

at least one first flexible band having an inner side and at least one first closure element on its said inner side, said at least one first closure element comprising a male projection extending outwardly from the inner side or a female cavity extending inwardly from the inner side,

at least one second flexible band with an inner side and at least one second closure element on its said inner side that is complementary to the first closure element and enables a reversible, sealed closure, said at least one second closure element comprising a female cavity extending inwardly from the inner side or a male projection extending outwardly from the inner side,[[and]]

a top side of the first band comprising at least one third closure element and at a top side of the second band comprising at least one first fourth closure element, said at least one third closure element comprising a male projection extending outwardly from the top side or a female cavity extending inwardly from the top side, and said at least one fourth closure element comprising a male projection extending outwardly from the top side or a female cavity extending inwardly from the top side;
and

the first and second bands being of a substantially same length.

106-108. (cancelled)

109. (currently amended) A method for filling, refilling, or emptying of flexible containers, comprising the steps:

providing a docking device comprising first and second coupling closures, each of the first and second coupling closures comprising at least one flexible band with at least one first closure element on its inner side, at least one second flexible band with at least one second closure element on its inner side that is complementary to the first closure element and enables a reversible, seal closure, said at least one first closure element comprising a male projection extending outwardly from the inner side or a female cavity extending inwardly from the inner side, and said at least one second closure element comprising a female cavity

extending inwardly from the inner side or a male projection extending outwardly from the inner side, and a top side of the first band comprising at least one third closure element and a top side of the second band comprising at least one fourth closure element, said at least one third closure element comprising a male projection extending outwardly from the top side or a female cavity extending inwardly from the top side, and said at least one fourth closure element comprising a male cavity extending outwardly from the top side or a female cavity extending inwardly from the top side, and wherein the third and fourth closure elements of the top sides of the first and second bands of the first coupling closure are complementary to the third and fourth closure elements with the top sides with the first and second bands of the second coupling closure so that the first and second bands of the first and second coupling closures are reversibly connectible with one another;

connecting a first flexible container with a second flexible container with the first and second coupling closures of said docking device;

opening the first and second coupling closures while maintaining the docking device environmentally-sealed;

transporting bulk material from the first container into the second container or vice versa;

closing the first and second coupling closures in an environmentally-sealed manner while maintaining the docking device environmentally-sealed; and

separating the first coupling closure connected to the first container and the second coupling closure connected to the second container from one another upon decoupling of the docking device.

110. (cancelled)